

2010 ISSUE #4

MARCH 8, 2010

# infoNET

A publication of the Governor's DD Council &amp; ID Action

## AUTISM MANDATE CLEARS HURDLE

A former mandate opponent in the Senate turns into a tireless advocate as the former Senate File 1 squeaks past the March 5 deadline.

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## Session Enters Final Month

The second funnel is now behind them and legislature ends in just four more weeks.

With the last of the “funnel” deadlines now behind them, legislators will return to the State Capitol next week to begin final negotiations on remaining bills and the state’s \$5.3 billion (and shrinking) budget.

**Friday (March 5) was the final legislative “funnel” deadline.** Funnel deadlines keep bills moving, and slowly whittle away the dead weight, the bills without enough political support to keep moving.

In order to stay alive and be eligible for debate from now until the end of session, a bill needs to have been voted out of one chamber (House or Senate) and be voted out of committee in the opposite chamber. So, a Senate File (SF) needs to be out of a House Committee and ready for House debate. Likewise, a House File (HF) needs to be out of a Senate Committee and ready for debate by the Senate.

### The best thing about funnel week: the end of funnel week.

Returning to the Capitol after the second funnel is like hitting the “reset” button. You get to start over. The list of bills is smaller (this year, historically small). Legislators start from scratch, re-evaluate priorities, and find a way to get things done in the new environment. Crafty legislators can always find ways to breathe new life into dead bills.

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“The most important political office is that of the private citizen.”

Former Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis

## Final Month (continued from page 1)

Truly, where there is a will, there is a way.

As the Dalia Lama said, *“Learn the rules so you know how to break them properly.”* If you really wanted a bill to pass or an issue to be debated, there is always a way, but you need to know the rules. Here are our favorite ways to bring bills that didn’t make the funnel back to life (ranked easiest to hardest):

1. Offer it as an amendment to another bill that’s alive.
2. Put it in a budget bill.
3. Put it in the Standings Bill (the final bill that is often called a “Christmas tree” for all the miscellaneous issues and gifts that get thrown on it; it usually is not written until the final days of session, but they will start getting their list of things to put in it soon).
4. Have your bill re-referred to Appropriations, Government Oversight, or Ways and Means (bills in these committees are immune to funnel deadlines).
5. Have the chairs of the committees listed request your bill as a study bill in their committees (Sens. Dvorsky, Appel, Bolkcom; Reps. Oldson, Mascher, Shomshor).
6. Ask the House and Senate Majority to sponsor companion bills Leaders (Rep. McCarthy & Sen. Gronstal). These bills can be debated at any time.
7. Ask the House Majority and Minority Leaders (Rep. McCarthy & Rep. Paulsen) or the Senate Majority and Minority Leaders (Sen. Gronstal & Sen. McKinley) to co-sponsor your bill. These bipartisan leadership bills can also be debated at any time, but they are nearly impossible to get.

So, if a bill you liked died, or you have an idea, it’s not too late. It won’t be easy, but it’s not impossible. If you can convince enough legislators that your idea is a good one, there is always a way to make it happen. Where there is a will (a legislative will that is) – there is a way. So while we say a bill is dead, remember that nothing is really dead until the session ends.

## Insurance Mandates Fall Victim to Funnel

Legislators have tried to make lemonade with the lemons they got this year, but it’s pretty tough when there isn’t enough sugar to go around. The state’s budget crisis has left legislators with precious few resources to do much of anything, so only a few bills have managed to make it far enough through the legislative process to stay alive until session’s end on or around March 31.

Two of the insurance mandates being considered are among these casualties. Here are a few of this funnel deadline’s survivors – and losers:

### Survivors

- ☑ \$70 million government reorganization bill
- ☑ Texting while driving ban
- ☑ All backseat passengers under 18 must wear seatbelts
- ☑ Domestic abusers won’t be able to keep a gun while an order is against them
- ☑ Regulation of amateur mixed martial arts
- ☑ Laws that strengthen corporate campaign contribution rules after a US Supreme Court ruling opened the door for businesses to contribute to campaigns
- ☑ Requirement that hospitals to notify law officers if a mental health patient in custody is released (the “Ed Thomas” bill)
- ☑ Give veterans the day off for Veterans Day
- ☑ Restrict the release of genetic testing information
- ☑ Allow power companies to look at building another nuclear power plant

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## Final Month (cont. from page 2)

### Losers

- ☑ Legalized sports betting
- ☑ Mandated the use of ethanol fuel
- ☑ Allowed convenience stores to sell liquor
- ☑ Required health insurance to pay for the treatment of all types of mental illness (mental health parity)
- ☑ Required health insurance to pay for children's hearing aids and audiology services
- ☑ Prohibited pharmacists from substituting anti-epileptic drugs without the permission of the doctor.

Despite the best efforts of Rep. Beth Wessel-Kroeschell and Rep. Mark Smith, the bill requiring health insurance to pay for the treatment of all mental illnesses and substance abuse failed to move after clearing the last funnel. The bill, [HF 234](#), was not brought up for a vote in the House. Legislators vow to continue to find ways to bring this issue up for a vote, so if this is important to you, keep advocating.

### Quote of the week

"It is unfortunate that we decided to twiddle our thumbs for another year, and waste another year while real lowans are hurting."

*Sen. Matt McCoy during debate on health care reform (and the decision to delay any additional reforms for at least a year).*

## Autism Mandate Clears Funnel

After several years of discussion, the Iowa Senate has passed a bill to require insurance plans cover the treatment and diagnosis of autism and autism spectrum disorders. In an encouraging turn of events, a past opponent has become one of its biggest champions this year.

Sen. Tom Rielly of Oskaloosa, an insurance agent, opposed this insurance mandate for years, worried that it would increase insurance rates for already struggling individuals and small businesses. It would have been easy for him to file this bill away and forget about it. He could have killed it in thousands of ways.

But for the last two years, he has held meetings to learn more about autism and the effect of the bill. What he learned was that autism happens to anyone, and when it does, it can drive families to bankruptcy. Sen. Rielly became an advocate for the bill this year, and its floor manager.

*"This has been an educational process for me," said Sen. Rielly. "I know what mandates do to insurance rates...but I certainly do not like to see families go bankrupt when we have proven, effective therapies available. I hope that we can start getting some experience about what this great bill can do for Iowa families."*

Sen. Daryll Beall of Fort Dodge was the bill's original sponsor and the grandfather of a child with autism, introduced the bill year after year. As originally written, the bill would have required all state-regulated insurance plans to pay for the treatment and diagnosis of autism and autism spectrum disorders. In order to get the votes needed to move forward, the Senate chose to pass a bill that would apply only to state employee health insurance plans.

*"This bill does not go far enough," said Sen. Beall. "It is simply the best we can do for now. It's a start. We were told the bill as originally drafted would have died. The bill is very limited in scope...the expected premium increase is expected to only be .39%...but I plan to come back to expand this to all Iowa children. "*

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## Autism (continued)

The bill ([SF 2349](#)) passed the Iowa Senate 42-8. Senators voting against the bill include: Senators Merlin Bartz, Jerry Behn, Jim Hahn, Steve Kettering, Paul McKinley, Jim Seymour, Ron Wieck, and Brad Zahn.

The House Commerce Committee passed the bill out on Thursday night, just in time to save it from the funnel deadline. Legislators had to caucus twice before getting enough votes to pass the bill. It took a bipartisan group of Commerce Committee legislators to get the bill brought up for discussion.

**Representatives voting FOR the bill (16):** Janet Petersen (Committee Chair), Mike Reasoner (Committee Vice Chair), Dave Jacoby, Doris Kelley, Bob Kressig, Jo Oldson, Donovan Olson, Tyler Olson (Floor Manager), Christopher Rants, Nathan Reichert, Paul Shomshor, Kent Sorenson, Doug Struyk, Andrew Wenthe, Matt Windschitl & Ray Zirkelbach

**Representatives voting AGAINST the bill (7):** Chuck Soderberg (Committee Ranking Member), Erik Helland, Steve Lukan, Dawn Pettengill, Brian Quirk, Tom Sands & Nick Wagner

Senators Rielly and Beall, and Rep. Mark Kuhn, were present during the committee meeting and lobbied their House colleagues all day Thursday to make sure the bill had the votes needed to get it through the funnel. The bill is now on the House Calendar, but faces an uphill battle, as Rep. Soderberg has requested a new fiscal note to see how much it will cost the state to do this. Keep an eye on the website & Facebook for update.

## Budget News

Two weeks ago, legislators were given targets for each of the seven budget areas (view targets at [www.infonetiowa.com](http://www.infonetiowa.com)).

Targets are the total amount of money each subcommittee is allowed to spend on programs and services in their area. For the most part, these budget targets kept funding the same as the current year, with two exceptions. Education was asked to spend \$11.5 million less, and **Health/Human Services was asked to cut a whopping \$173 million** from their current spending level. Because Health/Human Services is currently receiving an enhanced Medicaid match from the federal government that is due to expire in December, the real cut to the budget is closer to \$375 million.

The seven budget subcommittees were then asked to decide how they were going to spend their targets, and have their bills ready to go by March 11.

Here are some things of interest in the proposed FY 2011 Health/Human Services budget:

- ☑ The Department of Human Services will need to lay off at least 500 workers, and another 300 jobs will be left unfilled after early retirements.
- ☑ The Medicaid budget assumes the federal government will extend the enhanced Medicaid match, which was a part of last year's stimulus package. This continues to add \$95 million to the state Medicaid budget. If Congress fails to renew this, the state will need to come up with an additional \$95 million or cut Medicaid services.
- ☑ The Medicaid budget includes an unexpected \$39.5 million in extra Medicare Part D funding.
- ☑ The subcommittee used \$187 million from cash reserves (the state's savings account) to avoid massive Medicaid service cuts. These are one-time funds and will need to be replaced in FY 2012 when reserves will be nearly depleted.
- ☑ Medicaid is still underfunded by about \$23 million. That means the state will need to come up with the money at some point, but maybe not until next legislative session.

The proposed FY 2011 Health/Human Services Budget funds the following at current levels:

- ☑ Audiology services for kids (\$34,447)
- ☑ Child Health Specialty Clinics (\$2,480,612)

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 5**



## Budget News (continued from page 4)

- ☑ Muscular Dystrophy funding (\$18,473)
- ☑ PKU Assistance (\$55,960)
- ☑ Epilepsy Education (\$31,925)
- ☑ Brain Injury Council (\$28,000) and Department of Public Health Brain Injury Services (\$21,336)
- ☑ Mental Health Institutes (\$20,664,942)
- ☑ MH/MR/DD Allowed Growth (\$48,697,893) – this is the same as the current year's post-10% across the board cut. FY 2009 funding for allowed growth was \$54.1 million.
- ☑ MH/DD Community Services (\$14,211,100) – this is also the same as the current year's post-10% across the board cut. FY 2009 funding for this was \$18,017,890.
- ☑ MH/DD State Cases (\$10,295,207) – the post-10% ATB cut level. The FY 2009 funding level was \$13,067,178.

The proposed FY 2011 Health/Human Services Budget cuts the following services:

- ☑ Glenwood State Resource School (\$319,375 cut) & Woodward State Resource School (\$82,824 cut)
- ☑ Daycare for Exceptional Children in Polk County (total elimination - \$350,000) – legislators will use a combination of EPSTDT and childcare dollars to pay for these services but it may not be enough.

The underfunding of Medicaid, the dependency on one-time funds, and the continued erosion of county MH/MR/DD funding could threaten the ability of people with disabilities to live safely and independently. Legislators do not have much choice, and they are truly feeling the weight of these decisions on their shoulders. But they do have options.

They can allow counties to raise their property tax rates to pay for services. They can raise money in other ways at the state level (gambling, taxes, user fees). They can reallocate the money, spending less on institutions and more on community-based services.

As the budget stands now, DHS and counties will have a very difficult time maintaining funding. Counties may need to start or add to waiting lists; programs and

services may be ended because funding is not available. *People will fall through the cracks.*

**Now is not the time to sit back and take notice. Now is the time to sit up and take action!**

- ☑ **You can view the budget spreadsheet at:**  
[http://www.legis.state.ia.us/scripts/docmgr/docmgr\\_comdocs.dll/showtypeFC?id=true&type=ih&com=37](http://www.legis.state.ia.us/scripts/docmgr/docmgr_comdocs.dll/showtypeFC?id=true&type=ih&com=37)
- ☑ **Call, write or email your legislators.** Tell them about the services you receive, how they are funded (county, HCBS waiver, other), and what they mean to you. You can do this from our online Action Center, or call the Senate (515.281.3371) or House (515.281.3221) switchboards during the week.
- ☑ **Write a letter to the editor** (you can do this online from our online Action Center).
- ☑ **Attend a local legislative forum** (a list is available online at [www.infonetiowa.com](http://www.infonetiowa.com)).

### Revenue Estimates Due March 11

The state's Revenue Estimating Conference (REC) will meet on March 11 to revise revenue estimates. The REC is a group of economists that look at how much money the state is taking in, compare it to other years, and predict how much money the state will collect this year. These "revenue estimates" are what the Legislature uses to budget.

By law, Iowa legislators can only spend 99% of the money they take in during the year. That is why the estimates are important – they guess how much money the state will take in, and legislators are allowed to spend 99% of that. The better the revenues, the more legislators get to spend. Of course, revenues have not been good over the past several years.

The current budgets are based on Iowa's revenues declining by 8.5%. Right now, economists are

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## Revenue Estimates (continued)

predicting Iowa is doing a bit better. The Legislative Fiscal Bureau recently announced revenues are declining at a slower rate, closer to 6.5%. If the REC changes its estimates and lowers the decline by 2%, the Legislature will have \$110 million more to spend. Likely all of that will go into the Health/human Services Budget, but that really is a drop in the bucket considering the use of \$375 million of one-time funds to balance that budget.

*We will announce the REC finding on March 11 on our website ([www.infonetiowa.com](http://www.infonetiowa.com)) and Facebook (search under "infonet").*

## Other Capitol News

On a sad note, **Rep. Roger Wendt** (D-Sioux City) announced he would not return to the Capitol last week after finding out that he has terminal lung cancer. Rep. Wendt had first been diagnosed with lung cancer 17 years ago, but had been in remission. He has been one of the Legislature's biggest education champions and chaired the House Education Committee. Rep. Wendt is in the hospital and is not expected to recover.

Wendt's departure leaves Democrats with a 55-44 majority in the Iowa House. Rep. Gene Ficken, D-Independence will become the new Chair of the House Education Committee (he was Vice-Chair).

The House suspended business early during funeral week, closing down for the week on Wednesday evening. **Speaker of the House Pat Murphy's** mother died on Sunday, and many legislators had asked to be able to attend her funeral on Thursday.

**Wellmark announced this year that it would be increasing insurance rates by 18%**, affecting more than 80,000 Iowans. In response, Commerce Chair Rep. Janet Petersen of Des Moines requested a hearing to learn more about how insurers set their rates, and what factors are used. She called

Wellmark's top executives into a packed meeting to ask questions, including how they built their new \$1 billion –plus building with cash.

Legislators later unveiled a new **"insurance company accountability plan"** to require insurance companies to report information on rate increases and health care expenditures to the state's insurance commissioner, including a ranking of factors that raise or lower costs in each insurance plan. Look for an amendment to be offered to an insurance bill sometime in the next two weeks. Watch [www.infonetiowa.com](http://www.infonetiowa.com) and Facebook for breaking news.

Legalized sports betting might be off the table for this year's session, but Governor Culver has called for an **expansion of gambling**. He is urging the Iowa Racing and Gaming Commission to approve four new casinos, which he says will create new jobs (and more state revenues). Voters in four counties voted to bring in a casino – Lyon, Webster, Tama & Wapello.

Hospitals will be required to notify law officers when they release a person who has been taken into custody and placed in the hospital for psychiatric observation/treatment. The bill, [SF 2352](#), is named after the **Aplington-Parkersburg High School football coach Ed Thomas**, who was shot to death in a school weight room last June. It has made it through the funnel.

Ed Thomas' son and brother were at the Capitol lobbying on the bill, which they hope would prevent future tragedies.

You will soon know who is running for legislative office. The three-week filing period begins today for candidates running for state or federal office. Candidates must file their paperwork by the close of business on March 19 in order to be placed on the ballot. You can watch who is announcing daily. The names of candidates who file will be posted between 4:30 and 5 p.m. each day at: [www.sos.state.ia.us](http://www.sos.state.ia.us).

## *infoNET* Bill Tracker

The *infoNET* bill tracking system is updated daily with new bills and changes in status. You can check on bills at any time at: [www.ialobby.com/CPCBillTracker/tabid/59/Default.aspx?cid=INFONET](http://www.ialobby.com/CPCBillTracker/tabid/59/Default.aspx?cid=INFONET).

Because space is limited, so we have only listed the bills surviving the funnel.

### **BILLS SIGNED INTO LAW**

**SF 2151 - Funding Shifts for Federal Recovery** - Makes \$12.8 million of funding reallocations to allow the state to collect federal ARRA funds (economic stimulus funds). Transfers \$1.8 million from the Mental Health Risk Pool to the Mental Health State Cases Program for FY 2010 to prevent service reductions in the program (there may still be some losing services). Effective 3/3/2010. *Passed Senate 31-16 & House 53-42*

**SF 2291 - Special Education Updates** - Allows a child who becomes 21 during the school year to continue to receive special education services until the end of the school year. Makes other changes about informed educational consent and who is able to determine whether a child needing special education is able to make decisions related to his/her education upon turning 21. Requires school districts and AEAs to comply with these changes, even if it costs them money to implement. Requires reporting on the disproportionate numbers of minority and ethnic populations receiving special education. Effective 7/1/2010. *Passed Senate 46-0 & House 95-0*

### **BILLS SENT TO GOVERNOR**

**SF 2088 - State Government Reorganization** - Makes a number of changes to the structure of state government, and saves \$70 million in efficiencies. View full description: [www.ialobby.com/CPCBillTracker/tabid/59/Default.aspx?cid=infoNET](http://www.ialobby.com/CPCBillTracker/tabid/59/Default.aspx?cid=infoNET)

**SF 2202 - Rights of Persons with Disabilities** - Changes the term "persons with physical disabilities" to "persons with disabilities" in Iowa law. Requires curb cuts (accessible slopes) at all intersections of newly constructed or repaired curbs, including paths. Eliminates the requirement that hearing dogs and service dogs be trained at a recognized training facility. Continues the current

simple misdemeanor penalty for someone denying or interfering with the use of a hearing or service dog, or other assistive animal. Requires these laws be implemented, even though they may cost more money (exempt from state mandate law). *Senate 47-0 & House 94-0*

**SF 2246 - Accessible Parking Permit Rules Waiver** - Allows the Department of Transportation (DOT) to waive the requirement that persons with disabilities applying for an accessible parking permit give either a social security number, driver's license number, or state-issued ID if the permit is for a person who is an infant (less than 1 year old) and the permit is temporary. Sets annual registration fees for trucks owned/leased and used by a person with a disability (or their household) at \$60. *Passed Senate 50-0 & House 94-0*

### **BILLS ON SENATE FLOOR**

**HF 2295 - AEA Task Force (Status: Senate Floor)** - Creates a Task Force to review the mission, structure, and funding of the Area Education Agencies (AEAs). Members include education stakeholders and AEA service users, including a parent or guardian of a child receiving special education services. Recommendations due 12/15/2010. *Floor Manager: Sen. Schmitz*

**SF 2367 - Administration/Regulation Budget (Status: Senate Floor)** - Spends \$63.8 million for the next fiscal year (FY 2011), which is an increase of \$2.9 million. Maintains current funding level for the newly merged Division of Community Advocacy and Services in the Department of Human Rights (\$1,247,926). The Government Reorganization bill (SF 2088) combined the former Divisions of Deaf Services, Persons with Disabilities, Latino Affairs, Status of Women, African Americans, and Asian Pacific Islanders into this single division. *Floor Manager: Sen. Danielson*

### **BILLS ON HOUSE FLOOR**

**HF 2339 & SF 2332 - HCBS Waiver/Intellectual Disabilities (Status: House Floor)** - Lowers the cap on administrative costs for supported community living programs in the HCBS waiver/Intellectual Disabilities waiver from 20% to 18%. Takes out the costs of training but does not cap them. Effective 7/1/2011. *Passed Senate 44-5; Floor Manager: Rep. Smith*

**SF 2175 - Veteran Membership on Boards & Commissions (Status: House Floor)** - Adds a military veteran with knowledge of veteran behavioral health needs

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## Bill Tracker (continued from page 7)

to the Mental Health Planning & Advisory Council and the Mental Health, Mental Retardation, Developmental Disabilities & Brain Injury (MH/MR/DD/BI) Commission. *Passed Senate 47-0; Floor Manager: Rep. Isenhardt*

**SF 2179 - Passenger Restraints for Minors (Status: House Floor)** - Requires all persons under 18 wear a seat belt or approved restraint while riding in the backseat. *Passed Senate 39-9; Floor Manager: Rep. Hanson*

**SF 2235 - LIHEAP/Fuel Deliveries (Status: House Floor)** - Prohibits vendors of delivered fuels to stop deliveries between November 1 and April 1 if a customer qualifies for assistance (LIHEAP) or can make a payment of at least \$250 (unless the person has exceeded the annual allotment for LIHEAP). *Passed Senate 34-16; Floor Manager: Rep. Reichert*

**SF 2333 - Nursing Home Inspections (Status: House Floor)** - Lists the qualifications for persons who inspect hospitals and nursing homes (must be free of conflicts of interest and complete ten hours of continuing education every two years). Outlines the procedures the Department of Inspections & Appeals (DIA) must take to enter a nursing home or hospital to investigate a dependent adult abuse report, and requires them to share information upon finding evidence of abuse with the person accused and the facility. Requires the facility to conduct its own investigation to determine what employment action should be taken (reassignment to other duties, place on administrative leave, etc). Spells out the process for appeals, and requests the legislative council conduct an interim study due process in child and dependent adult abuse cases. *Passed Senate 50-0; Floor Manager: Rep. Hunter*

**SF 2349 - Autism Insurance Coverage (Status: House Floor)** - Requires Iowa's state employee insurance plans include coverage for the diagnosis and treatment of autism spectrum disorders, including habilitation services. Estimates based on real experience in other states expect this to cost the state between \$16,000-\$66,000 in premium increases (based on .20/subscriber to .83/subscriber annual premium rate increases). Successor to SF 1. *Passed Senate 42-8; Floor Manager: Rep. T. Olson*

**SF 2352 - Law Enforcement Notification/Release of Mentally Ill (Status: House Floor)** - Allows a law enforcement official to request that a hospital or facility treating a person incapacitated by a serious mental illness or chemical substance notify them when the person is released (if a warrant is issued), and allows a

hospital/facility to detain the person for another 48 hours if the law enforcement officials are en route to pick the person up. Requires the hospital notify law enforcement if requested. This is in response to the Parkersburg killing this summer. *Passed Senate 48-0; Floor Manager: Rep. Mertz*

**SF 2356 - Health Care Reform & IowaCare Plus (Status: House Floor)** - View full description: [www.ialobby.com/CPCBillTracker/tabid/59/Default.aspx?cid=infoNET](http://www.ialobby.com/CPCBillTracker/tabid/59/Default.aspx?cid=infoNET). *Passed Senate 45-5; Floor Manager: Rep. Smith*

**SF 2366 - Governor's Supplemental Appropriations (Status: House Floor)** - Adds \$50 million back funding for items the Governor held harmless from his 10% across the board cuts last fall (the "backfill"). Includes additional funding for PKU. View full description: [www.ialobby.com/CPCBillTracker/tabid/59/Default.aspx?cid=infoNET](http://www.ialobby.com/CPCBillTracker/tabid/59/Default.aspx?cid=infoNET). *Passed Senate 30-17; Floor Manager: Rep. Oldson*

### BILLS IN HOUSE COMMITTEES

**HF 2429 - Disabled Veteran Property Tax Protection (Status: House Ways & Means Committee)** - Keeps property taxes the same on a disabled veteran's home (no more increases). *Subcommittee: Not yet assigned*

### BILLS IN SENATE COMMITTEES

**SF 2087 - Brain Injury Fund (Status: Senate Appropriations Committee)** - Creates a brain injury services fund, establishes a 5% surcharge on various motor vehicle moving violations, uses those fines to pay for services to persons with brain injuries. *Subcommittee: Sen. Dvorsky & Kettering*

### BILLS DYING IN THIS FUNNEL

- ☒ HF 234 - Mental Health Parity
- ☒ HF 2404 - Insurance Mandate/Kids Hearing Aids
- ☒ HF 2410 - Anti-Epileptic Drugs
- ☒ HF 2439 - Mental Health/Federal Firearms Law
- ☒ HF 2470 - Election Law Technical Changes
- ☒ SF 2308 - Marriage Dissolution/Mental Illness





## Action Center

Making contacts with your legislators simple & fast.

**Step One.** Go to the Action Center ([www.infonetiowa.com](http://www.infonetiowa.com)).

**Step Two.** Sign in with your email address and zip code. This tells the Action Center who you are. The first time you use this tool, you need to verify your address and name. We need a street address or the system will not work (PO boxes will not work). *You only need to do this once.*

**Step Three.** You are now in the Action Center. You will be given the choice of advocating on a hot topic, or an issue of your choice. Simply click on your choice.

**Step Four.** The system automatically finds your elected officials, and addresses and signs your email for you. All you need to do is write your message (sometimes we'll help you get started). Then click "send."

**Step Five.** You will now have the option of forwarding our Action Center to a friend. This allows friends to use the action center to contact their elected officials.

Speak Out.  
Get Involved.  
Take Action.



Educate your elected officials about the issues that matter most to you!

[GO](#)

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Get breaking news & talk to other advocates – friend us on Facebook by becoming an *infoNET fan*.

Just search "infonet" at  
[www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)

facebook

## Upcoming Public Forums

Legislative town hall meetings and public forums are a great place to advocate for you issues. A full list of forums is at: [www.infonetiowa.com](http://www.infonetiowa.com).

Because of space, we cannot print all of the 200-plus forums planned in the next three months. Below is a list of the communities having forums over the next two weeks – check your local newspaper, call your legislator, or go to [www.infonetiowa.com](http://www.infonetiowa.com).

### Forums are planned in the following communities on:

- ☒ **Friday, March 12** – East Peru, Keokuk, Macksburg, Marble Rock, Nora Springs, Rockford & Winterset
- ☒ **Saturday, March 13** – Atlantic, Altoona, Aplington, Arnold's Park, Baxter, Bristow, Carroll, Clinton, Colo, Council Bluffs, DeWitt, Lamont, LeMars, Lisbon, Logan, Missouri Valley, Mitchellville, Mount Auburn, New Hartford, Orange City, Oskaloosa, Parkersburg, Prairie City, Red Oak, Rockwell City, Runnells, Spencer, Sully, West Des Moines & Winthrop
- ☒ **Sunday, March 14** – Ames
- ☒ **Friday, March 19** – Carlisle, Cedar Falls, Indianola (2 of them) & Norwalk
- ☒ **Saturday, March 20** – Audubon, Cedar Rapids, Clear Lake, Corning, Creston, Denison, Elkart, Ellsworth, Fairfield, Glenwood, Grimes, Harlan, Hawarden, Johnston, Jolley, Maquoketa, Mt. Ayr, Newton, Oelwein, Polk City, Poweroy, Sheldon, Somers, Urbandale, Washington, Waukee, Westfield & Williams

**Your US Representative is:**  
[US Representative]

**Your State Representative is:**  
[Representative]  
Capitol: 515/281-3221  
Home: [IAHouseHomePhone]  
Email: [IAHouseEmail]

**Your State Senator is:**  
[Senator]

Capitol: 515/281-3371  
Home: [IASenateHomePhone]  
Email: [IASenateEmail]

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2010 ISSUE #4

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# infoNET

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